(a) whether it is a fact that not only indigenous but imported drugs could also be spurious;

(b) if so, the action taken against those involved in trading of spurious drugs;

, (c) whether it is also a fact that an international racket is involved in spreading the business of spurious drugs alongwith face currency; and

, . (d) if so, the steps taken to save the common man from the scourage of spurious drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes, Sir. The imported drugs could also be spurious.

(b) Under section 27 of the said Act, however, himself or by any person on his behalf manufactures for sale or for distribution, or sells, or stocks or exhibits or offers for sale of distributes any drug deemed to be spurious under section 17-B of the said Act, shall be publishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years but which may extend to five years and with fine which shall not be less than five thousand rupees. Further, Under section 18 of the said Act, State Licensing Authority is empowered to prohibit the manufacture and sale of spurious drugs.

(c) No specific information has come to notice of the Government.

(d) However, with a view to strengthen the preventive measures in this regard, the Government has introduced the Drugs and Cosmetics (Amendment) Bill, 2005 in the Parliament to provide for more stringent punishment to the offenders.

Extinction of Herbal Plants

852. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that many pharmaceutical companies are exploiting herbal plants for their commercial purposes against the permitted levels;

(b) whether Government is also aware that due to such unabated exploitation of the plants many medicinal plants are now becoming extremely rare;

(c) whether there is any committee to monitor the quantity of the herbs extracted by licenced pharmaceutical companies; and

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(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) There is no such information. However, as per report of study undertaken by National Medicinal Plants Board through Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), Bangalore about 960 species of medicinal plants are in trade, of which, 178 species are in high demand with annual consumption